

2006/2008

STATUS OF AMBIENT SURFACE WATER QUALITY IN ARIZONA

**Arizona's Integrated 305(b) Assessment
and 303(d) Listing Report**

November 2008



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Arizona's Integrated 305(b) Assessment and 303(d) Listing Report

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A special thanks to ADEQ's monitoring staff who traveled across the state collecting the data used in this report:

Amanda Fawley, Susan Fitch, Tim Franquist, Jennifer Hickman, Lee Johnson, Lin Lawson, Doug McCarty, Greg Olsen, Patsy Olsen, Kyle Palmer, Jamie Piver, Samuel Rector, Robert Scalamera, Patti Spindler, Jason Sutter, Doug Towne, and R. Scott Williams

Special Note:

ADEQ has combined the 2006 and 2008 305(b) assessment and 303 (d) listing report. No new data was evaluated for the 2008 integrated report. ADEQ anticipates a full update on Arizona waters in 2010.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Every two years, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is required by the federal Clean Water Act to conduct a comprehensive analysis of water quality data associated with Arizona's surface waters to determine whether state water quality standards are being met and designated uses are being supported. This integrated surface water assessment and impaired waters listing report (2006/2008 Assessment Report) serves three functions.

- Nationally, it fulfills a reporting requirement of the Clean Water Act, and is submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and used to report on national water quality issues and concerns.
- For ADEQ, it provides a mandate to compile environmental data and information from ADEQ's surface water quality protection programs, as well as from other agencies, organizations, and individuals. This comprehensive evaluation of quality of water in Arizona is used to set priorities, allocate resources, and make decisions about land use activities, discharges to the water, future monitoring, and program initiatives.
- For the public, it provides an opportunity to learn about and comment on the status of surface water quality in the state.

Surface Water Assessment Methods and Technical Support

ADEQ has created a separate assessment methods document. It is assumed that the reader will obtain and reference this technical support document (Appendix G) when using the information in this assessment.

The Assessment Methods and Technical Support document provides a description of the assessment process and specific assessment and impaired water listing criteria. It also provides information about the monitoring data and information used in this assessment and Arizona's credible data requirements. The three appendices provide: surface water quality standards used in the assessment, Arizona's TMDL statute, and the Impaired Water Identification Rule.

Report Overview

Chapter I – Introduction and Purpose
Chapter II – Assessments of individual surface waters, organized by watershed
Chapter III – Summary Information
Chapter IV – Action Plan
Annotated References
Appendix A – Look up table of surface waters, indicating the watershed
Appendix B – Assessment Category Lists
Appendix C – Impaired Water Schedule and Prioritization
Appendix D – Critical Conditions
Appendix E – Delisting Impairments
Appendix F – Water Quality Improvements
Appendix G – Surface Water Assessment Methods and Technical Support Document

Although an attempt was made to avoid technical jargon and unnecessary abbreviations, this is a technical report. Acronyms and terms used in the assessment report are defined in the Assessment Methods and Technical Support document (draft 2006/2008).

Changes Affecting the Assessment Process

Although ADEQ has proposed revisions to surface water quality standards and the Impaired Water Identification Rule, this assessment does not reflect any changes in either of these rule packages. The assessment is using the same rules that were in effect for the 2004 assessment. However, the following changes and clarifications in federal guidance for completing assessments and listings were incorporated in this assessment:

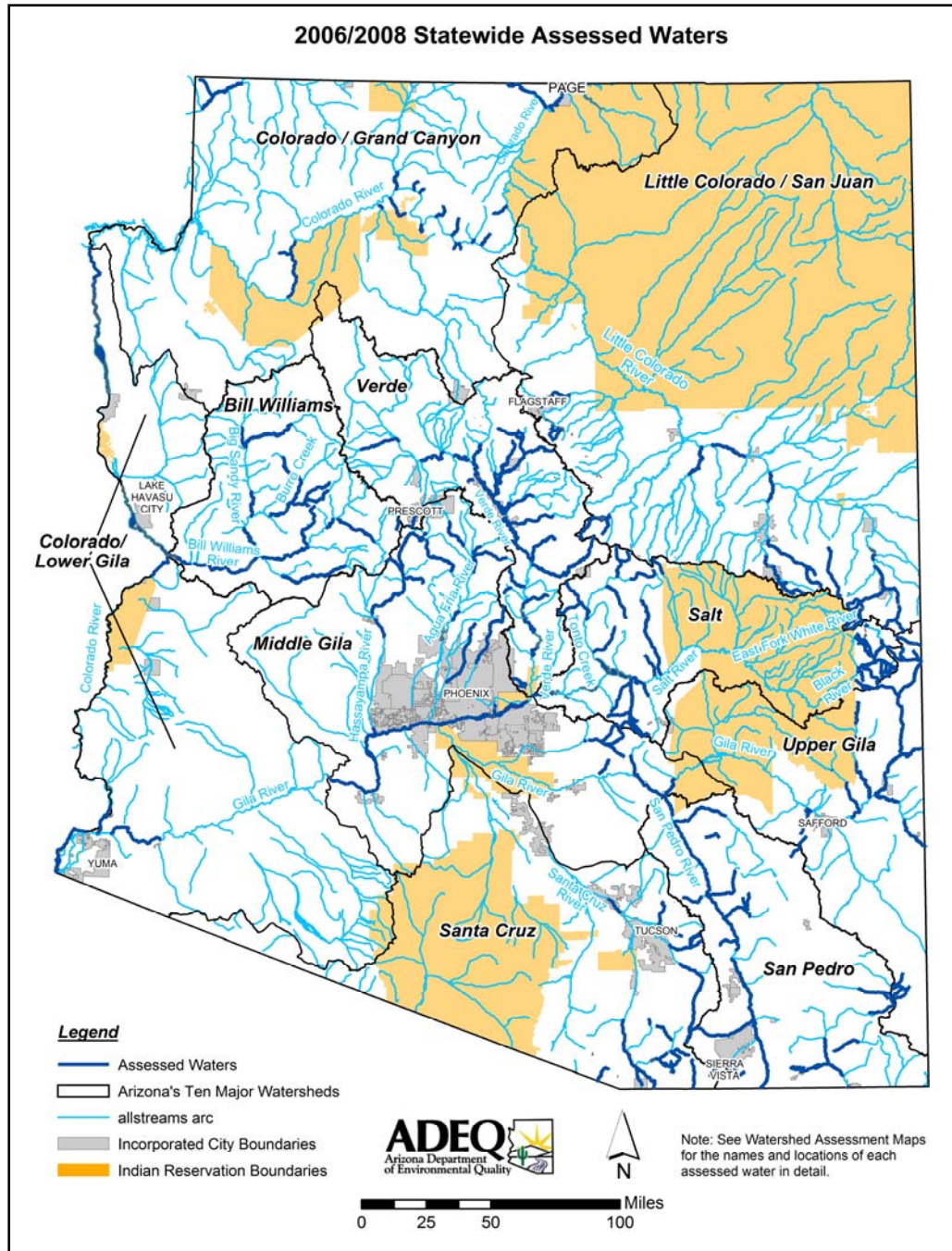
- Evidence of whether a sample represents a 4-day period, such as hydrologic stability, should be evaluated where available, when using a grab sample to represent chronic aquatic and wildlife conditions.
- An assessment unit can be listed in multiple categories when a TMDL has been completed on some pollutants, but not all pollutants causing impairment.
- When listing an impaired assessment unit in Category 4B, based on alternative pollution control requirements, the state must provide substantial supporting evidence of a regulatory commitment to bringing the surface water into compliance with its standards.

The Surface Water Assessment Methods and Technical Support document describes how these changes were implemented in this assessment. Further revisions of the Impaired Water Identification Rule are required to establish any of these as listing or delisting requirements.

CHAPTER II

WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENTS BY WATERSHED

Assessments are reported alphabetically by individual assessment units in this chapter and grouped by the 10 watersheds, as illustrated on the following map: Bill Williams Watershed, Colorado – Grand Canyon Watershed, Colorado – Lower Gila Watershed, Little Colorado Watershed, Middle Gila Watershed, Salt Watershed, San Pedro Watershed, Santa Cruz Watershed, Upper Gila Watershed, and Verde Watershed.



If the reader is uncertain about which watershed to look in for assessment information, an alphabetical listing of surface waters assessed is provided in **Appendix A**.

Assessment Information

A summary page is provided for each assessment indicating:

- Designated use support and an overall assessment
- Impairment status and pollutant causing impairment (if applicable)
- Monitoring used in the assessment
- Exceedances
- Data gaps and monitoring priorities.

The data gaps and monitoring needs information provides the “Planning List” information used to prioritize future monitoring. Surface waters not assessed are also included in the general planning list, as the lack of data to support assessments is a reason to be placed on ADEQ’s internal Planning List.

The reader should refer to the Surface water Assessment Methods and Technical Support document for information concerning the assessment process, determining exceedances, assessment criteria, assessment categories, and monitoring prioritization criteria.

Watershed Information

General background information and a few maps are provided for each watershed to provide some context for the assessments. One map (or a series of maps) shows the assessed surface waters and the monitoring sites used in this assessment. The watershed reports also provide descriptions of TMDLs, water quality improvement projects, and other studies that have been initiated or completed since 2000.

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